London Mission
Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

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Commonwealth Day Observance 2011

JAN - MAR 2011 **CONTENTS**

LONDONMISSION

09 | Statement by the Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago on the passing of Sir Ellis Clarke.

12 | H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner meets with London's Deputy Mayor

FRONT COVER: 'Commonwealth Day Observance, 2011'
Photo: Courtesy Royal Commonwealth Society

INSIDE COVER : *H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner is greeted by the H.M. The Queen upon the presentation of his Credentials.*

NEWS

03 | Children's Life Fund Launch

04 | H.E. Garvin Nicholas presents credentials to HM Queen Elizabeth II.

08 | Sir Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke

13 | H.E. Garvin Nicholas discusses Olymics with Mr Michael Larry Romany of TTOC

14 | Women as Agents of Change

16 | Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2011

EYEONTRADE

20 | Government offers TT$20M incentives for Farmers in T&T

21 | 'A' Rating Affirmed on Trinidad & Tobago.

22 | BBC Caribbean Broadcasts comes to an end.

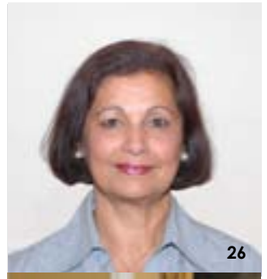
FEATURE

24 | Launch of the Children's Life Fund

26 | Sylvia Maharaj Waltham Forest Magistrate

27 | The Nationals' Meetings

28 | CVQ and Education Caribbean Youth 'At Risk'



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LAUNCH OF THE CHILDREN'S LIFE FUND LONDON 2011

On Friday 18th March, 2011, the High Commission for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago hosted a reception at the Royal Garden Hotel, London to launch the Children's Life Fund (a registered charity in Trinidad and Tobago created to provide funding and critical support specifically for children needing life saving, tertiary-level health care services) and to honour the Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, the Honourable Mrs. Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

On the night, attendees were greeted on entry with sweet songs of steel pan music played by BT Melodians. The formal part of the programme began with Master of Ceremonies, the Honourable Winston 'Gyspy' Peters MP, Minister of Arts and Multiculturalism introducing calysponian Denyse Plummer who sang a very powerful rendition of the Trinidad and Tobago national anthem. His Excellency, Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, London, then welcomed guests and urged them to support the Children's Life Fund Charity as it aimed to provide a better quality of life for children who are in need of specialist medical assistance.

Following welcome remarks by High Commissioner Nicholas, the Hon. Stephen Cadiz MP, Minister of Trade and Industry shared the success story of a young girl from St. James, Trinidad who recieved financial assistance from the Fund for much needed medical care abroad and as a result is alive and enjoying her pre-adolescent years.

The specially invited guests, business representatives and cultural delegates were shown a short promotional video after Minister Cadiz's address. The Honourable Prime Minster then delivered the feature address in which she stated that, "We owe a duty of care to the most vulnerable in our society and the harsh reality is that there is a lot more to be done as we strive to provide the best medical attention for our children". Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar also highlighted the fact that "One of the crucial factors in the progress of any country is the development of the child, the adult of tomorrow - tomorrow's engineers, doctors, progressive farmers, teachers, scientists, social leaders."

The Prime Minister revealed, "The Children's Life Fund was created to provide funding and critical support specifically for children needing life saving, tertiary-level health care services," and "the aim was to raise TT$100 million in the life fund to help families with children in need of life-saving surgeries."

Photos: Donald Chambers, Lawson C. Lovell

01: *The Hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar.* **02:** *H.E. Garvin Nicholas addressing the audience.* **03:** *H.E. Garvin Nicholas with Baroness Floella Benjamin.* **04:** *Dr. Danny Sriskandarajah and his wife, Ms Suzanne Lambert flanking Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar.* **05:** *Denyse Plummer performing at the launch in a costume designed by Brian Mc Farlane.*

(L) Rikki Jai and **(R)** Machel Montano with other performers at the launch of the Children's Life Fund.

Before closing her address the Prime Minister invited Baroness Floella Benjamin OBE to address the gathering.

The programme concluded with a vote of thanks given by the Hon. Winston Peters MP. Enterntainment was provided by four-time Calypso Queen Denyse Plummer, five-time Chutney Soca Monarch Rikki Jai, Young King Calypso Monarch 2011 Rodney "Benjai" Le Blanc , Soca Monarch 2011 Machel Montano and the HD Band comprising Patrice Roberts, Kernel Roberts, Zan, Farmer Nappy, Pravana Maharaj and Junior Calypso Monarch 2011 Timel Rivas as well as an impromtu extempo to everyone's delight from Minister Peters.

A pledge of TT$100,000 to 'kick start' the Children's Life Fund in London was made by Mr. Andy and Mrs. Heather Thorne of Kestrel Liner Agencies. Mr Thorne also pledged TT$30 for every shipment they carry to Trinidad between now and end of 2011 with a goal of increasing their support to TT$ 250,000. This goodwill gesture was later matched by Soca star Machel Montano who, in addition to donating his appearance fees, pledged a further TT$100,000 to the Children's Life Fund, from his Soca Monarch 2011 prize money.

About the Fund

Created and established in November 2010 by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Children's Life Fund's aegis is to provide urgent relief for the children, assisting those who live in the shadow of disease and illness. The Fund has also received support from the renewed charity medical Schriners Children's Hospital. In addition, all Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament contribute 5% of their salary to the Fund.

Children's Life Fund

Account Number: **50927848**
Sort Code: **204734**

Trinidad and Tobago High Commission (Children's Life Fund)
Barclays Bank, West Halkin Street, London SW1X 8JE

H.E. Garvin Nicholas presents Credentials to HM Queen Elizabeth II

Trinidad and Tobago's High Commissioner to the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, His Excellency Garvin Edward Timothy Nicholas, presented his credentials to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, on Thursday 10th February 2011, at Buckingham Palace in London. He was accompanied by Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Counsellor, Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary, Ms. Zanifah Williams, Immigration Attaché and Mrs. Allison Quong Sing, Administrative Attaché.

At the Palace, High Commissioner Nicholas was greeted by the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps who introduced him to Her Majesty. After presenting his Letters of Credence and Recall, High Commissioner Nicholas engaged in a brief discussion with her Majesty and then introduced ▶▶

his accompanying members of staff.

Upon returning from Buckingham Palace, His Excellency Mr. Garvin Nicholas hosted a Vin d' Honneur at the High Commission. The event was well attended and guests included the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, High Commissioners, Ambassadors, Baroness Floella Benjamin, heads of several International Organisations, officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, members of the 2012 Planning Committee of the 50th Anniversary of Independence and other nationals of Trinidad and Tobago residing in the United Kingdom.

In addressing the attendees, the High Commissioner spoke about his mandate to strengthen the excellent bilateral relations which exist between Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom. He also informed that it was incumbent upon him to strengthen relations with those countries to which the Mission is also accredited namely Germany, Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden.

His Excellency spoke about working closely with countries of the Commonwealth and Latin America with the aim of positioning Trinidad and Tobago as a hub for trade and investment. He reiterated his commitment to promoting Trinidad and Tobago, exploring new initiatives and increasing awareness of all that Trinidad and Tobago has to offer. These included the world famous Carnival, the Steelpan, natural gas, eco-tourism and mouth-watering cuisine.

The High Commissioner noted that Trinidad and Tobago had agreed to host a Caribbean Investment Forum in June 2011 which was currently being organised in partnership with the Commonwealth Business Council. He ended by saying that London was the place to be in 2012 as there would be a number of key events taking place that year notably the Queen's Jubilee, Trinidad and Tobago's 50th Anniversary of Independence and the Olympics.

***01:** Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II greets H.E. Garvin Nicholas. **02:** H.E. Garvin Nicholas with his Credentials in hand. **03:** H.E. Garvin Nicholas exits Buckingham Palace in Her Majesty's royal carriage. **04: (L-R)** Ms. Zanifah Williams, Immigration Attaché , Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Counsellor, H.E. Garvin Nicholas, Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary and Mrs. Allison Quong Sing, Administrative Attaché.* **Photo:** Roland Kemp

Commonwealth Day Observance Service at Westminster Abbey

01

02

03

04

01: *(from left) Her Majesty The Queen, Dean and Chapter of Westminster the Very Reverend Dr John Hall, The Commonwealth Secretary General His Excellency Mr. Kamalesh Sharma and The Hon. Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar.* **02**: *H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner being escorted into Westminster Abbey.* **03:** *(middle front row) Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar next to H.E. Garvin Nicholas, (Front row far left) Dr the Hon. Surujrattan Rambachan, Minister of Foreign Affairs and (Front row far right) The Honourable Chandresh Sharma MP, Minister of Local Government with participants from the Youth Conference hosted by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA).* **04:** *The Hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar with Prime Minister David Cameron at the Commonwealth Day Reception in Marlborough House.*

The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister arrived in London on Sunday 13th March, to participate in celebrations of Commonwealth Week 2011 in her capacity as Chair-in-Office of the Commonwealth.

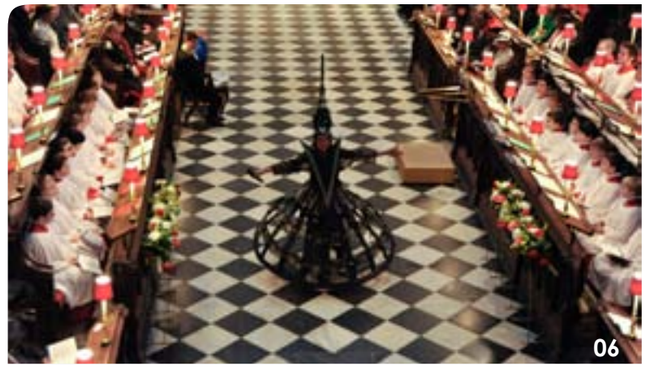
Commonwealth Day is celebrated around the Commonwealth for the purpose of promoting an awareness of global issues, international co-operation and the work of the Commonwealth. This year the Commonwealth chose 'Women as Agents of Change' as the theme for its celebrations.

During her weeklong visit to the United Kingdom, the Prime Minister participated in several meetings and delivered feature addresses at various parliamentary, local government, and business forums in her capacity as Chairperson-in-Office of the Commonwealth.

The Prime Minister also participated in the Commonwealth Day Observance ceremony at Westminster Abbey held on Monday 14th March. The Observance is a large multi-faith gathering, attended by Her Majesty the Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, Heads of Government, High Commissions, faith leaders, several hundred young people and dignitaries from around the world.

At the start of the service, the Queen was received at the Great West Door by Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey the Very Reverend Dr John Hall, The Commonwealth Secretary General His Excellency Mr. Kamalesh Sharma and Mrs. Sharma, The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago and The Lord Watson of Richmond OBE, Chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Societies.

05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07

05: *(L-R) H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner, Kemi Awonaya, flag-bearer and The Hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar.* **06:** *Denyse Plummer performing her song 'Woman is Boss'* **07:** *The Hon. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar reading from the Book of Luke to the congregation.* **Photos:** *Donald Michael Chambers, Andrew Dunsmore*

In The Queen's Commonwealth Day Message 2011, Her Majesty said, "This year, the Commonwealth celebrates the important role that women already play in every walk of life and in every Commonwealth country – from the richest to the poorest areas, across continents and oceans, from villages to places of international debate, in every culture and faith – recognising that women are 'agents of change' in so many ways: as mothers and sisters, teachers and doctors, artists and craftspeople, smallholders and entrepreneurs, and as leaders of our societies, unleashing the potential of those around them."

Among the speakers at the service were Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar; H.E. Mr. Kamalesh Sharma; Dr. Dambisa Moyo, Economist and New York Times best-selling author of both *Dead Aid: Why Aid is Not Working* and *How There is a Better Way*; Poet Laureate Carol Ann Duffy CBE, FRSL who performed the poem *Commonwealth Blessing For Girls*, a piece commissioned specifically for the occasion; Ms. Marie Staunton, Chief Executive of Plan International UK; Dr. Martina Roth, Director of the Intel Education Group for Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) and Ms. Annie Lennox OBE.

In her the address, Ms. Marie Staunton of Plan International UK highlighted findings of a recent joint RCS / Plan International UK publication that read, "It is not historical wealth but present political leadership which determines where is best place to be born a girl. Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago rank second and third", ahead of much richer countries. She went on to reveal," Five of the six poorest countries in the Commonwealth score higher than richer ones. A girl with political ambitions is better off in Rwanda than the UK."

> **"It is not historical wealth but present political leadership which determines where is best place to be born a girl".**

In addition to the statements delivered, there were performances by Bear Love, Maria Fidelis Convent School Gospel Choir, Ms. Denyse Plummer, The Choir of Wesminister Abbey and Dance Ihayami.

There was also a procession of Commonwealth flags (carried in order determined by date of membership) through the Abbey with musical accompaniment performed by Maria Fidelis Convent School Gospel Choir.

His Excellency Sir Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke, TC, GCMG
28th December 1917– 30th December 2010

On Friday 31st December, 2010, in a brief statement made to the media, his son Mr. Peter Clarke said: "Sir Ellis Clarke passed away peacefully at home on December 30 at 7.58 p.m. after having suffered a massive stroke on November 24 from which he never recovered."

Sir Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke, TC, GCMG (28 December 1917–30 December 2010) was the second and last Governor-General of Trinidad and Tobago and the first President of Trinidad and Tobago. Sir Ellis was one of the main architects of Trinidad and Tobago's 1962 Independence constitution.

Sir Ellis Clarke attended Saint Mary's College, winning an Island Scholarship in Mathematics in 1938. Ellis Clarke attended University College London of the University of London where he received a Bachelor of Law degree and was called to the bar at Gray's Inn. He returned to Port of Spain in 1941, taking up private practice there.

His Excellency served as Solicitor-General from 1954–1956, Deputy Colonial Secretary 1956–1957, and Attorney General 1957–1962. After Independence in 1962 he served as Ambassador to the United States, Canada and Mexico, and Permanent Representative to the United Nations.

In 1972 he succeeded Sir Solomon Hochoy as Governor General. When Trinidad and Tobago became a Republic in 1976, Sir Ellis was unanimously elected as the country's first President by the presidential electoral college, which comprised the elected members of both Houses of Parliament. He was re-elected

pictured: *His Excellency Sir Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke, TC, GCMG*

by the PNM-controlled electoral college and completed his second term in 1987. Disagreements with the new National Alliance for Reconstruction government resulted in Sir Ellis' decision not to seek a third term and he was succeeded by Noor Hassanali.

Sir Ellis Clarke was invested as a Companion of St Michael and St George by HM Queen Elizabeth II in 1960 and was awarded a knighthood as a Knight Grand Cross of that Order in 1972. Although he ceased to use the title Sir after the country became a republic, following his retirement from the presidency he re-adopted his title and was generally referred to as 'Former President, Sir Ellis Clarke' or Sir Ellis.

He was married to Lady Ermyntrude Clarke (1921–2002) for almost fifty years. They had three children: Peter Clarke (married to Suzanne Traboulay, a former beauty queen), Margaret-Ann (married to Gordon Fisken of Edinburgh, Scotland) and Richard (who died as a young child). Sir Ellis also has four grandsons: John Peter, Michael, Alexander and David, and one granddaughter, Katrina.

Ellis Clarke was one of six experts worldwide asked to submit reports to Australia's Republic Advisory Committee in 1993 detailing his country's experience in moving from a constitutional monarchy to a republic.

"Sir Ellis, a most outstanding and dedicated patriot, served our country with unswerving commitment."

His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards TC, CMT, Ph.D

On Wednesday 5 January, 2011 and Thursday 6 January, 2011, the body of the late Sir Ellis Clarke laid in State for public viewing at the Rotunda of the Red House, Port of Spain, from 6am-6pm daily.

Condolence books were also opened to the public and were located at the Red House, the Point Fortin Borough Corporation, the San Fernando Borough Corporation, the Chaguanas Borough Corporation, the Arima Borough Corporation and the Tobago House of Assembly as well as the High Commission, London.

On Friday 7th January 2011, the family of the late Sir Ellis Clarke held a private funeral service for him at 9.30am at the Church of Assumption, Long Circular Road, Maraval. Following this private service, the State funeral of the late Sir Ellis took place at 11.30am at the National Academy for the Performing Arts (NAPA), Port of Spain.

After the State funeral, Sir Ellis Clarke was interred in a private family service at the Lapeyrouse Cemetery, Port of Spain.

Statement from His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards on the passing of Sir Ellis Clarke

I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Sir Ellis Clarke TC, GCMG, KCMG, CMG, former President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

Sir Ellis, a most outstanding and dedicated patriot, served our country with unswerving commitment. He contributed significantly to laying the foundations on which this country would be built – as diplomat, in the law, as last Governor General of independent Trinidad and Tobago, as architect of our Republican Constitution and as first President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago.

This was the public profile, but otherwise, Sir Ellis gave his support to causes that did not necessarily bear the stamp of officialdom.

As an orator, he was surpassing and, with this extraordinary gift, inspired many by the nuggets of wisdom which he gave to us, without text, and often, with delightful humour.

Sir Ellis represented an era in public affairs and in personal dignity, upholding the best characteristics of what many of us see as the finest of the Trinidad and Tobago quality.

Sir Ellis' late spouse, Lady Ermyntrude, his son, Peter and daughter, Margaret Ann, completed this much respected and well-beloved family.

Other members of my family, the staff of the Office as well as of The President's House, past and present, who were blessed to know and to serve him, join me in conveying to the bereaved family deepest condolences.

H.E. Professor George Maxwell Richards TC, CMT, Ph.D

As Head of State, I express the nation's gratitude for the service of Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke and its grief at his passing.

In tribute to his life, let us all resolve to heed his example.

Statement by the Prime Minister the Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar on the passing Sir Ellis Clarke

The Government will give this great son of the soil and the veritable Grandfather of our Nation a State funeral, as is befitting his status and accomplishments as one of Trinidad and Tobago's greatest legal and academic minds and a contributor to nation building.

It is with a sense of great sadness that I extend my deepest condolences to the family of the venerated Sir Ellis Clarke, our country's first President and Head of State, on his passing last evening.

Indeed, Trinidad and Tobago is now bereft of one of its longstanding founding heroes and his passing is a tremendous loss to the national community.

Sir Ellis Emmanuel Innocent Clarke proved by his life's achievements the very essence of our country's watchwords—how far we can as individuals and a people, go if we adhere to the strictures of "discipline, production and tolerance."

His life itself was an inspirational testament to patriotism, dedication and nationalism.

That Sir Ellis was an island scholar who overcame the colonial obstacles and broke racial and other barriers that defined that era to successfully pursue his tertiary education in London; then become a lawyer in the 1940s and then ultimately become the first local Governor General was a reflection of the fact that

The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister.

man's ability, character and willpower is truly all it takes to attain greater heights, despite the odds against him.

His immediate service to this country's public service and legal development via his many roles in the Colonial Government came in many forms—as Solicitor General, Deputy Colonial Secretary, Attorney General and Constitutional Advisor to the Cabinet. He also served in various Post-Colonial diplomatic posts to ensure our fledging nation was best represented abroad. This again was a testimony to his commitment to nation-building at a time when Trinidad and Tobago needed local intellectuals to steer and develop its philosophy and political, social and economic stability both locally and abroad.

But perhaps his greatest contribution to our nation was his viable and crucial drafting of our country's 1962 Constitution, which has founded the framework for Trinidad and Tobago's democracy, for which we are internationally respected and which remains the bulwark for our administration of justice and our rule of law.

Throughout his long, fulfilling life, Sir Ellis not only remained steadfast in his contribution to our nation's legal and social systems via dispute resolution, matters of the law (especially constitutional issues and most recently, his commitment to Constitutional Reform) and diplomatic conflicts.

He also impressed upon the wider world his intellectualism and legal brilliance, having been one of six experts worldwide asked to submit reports to Australia's Republic Advisory Committee in 1993 detailing our country's experience in moving from a Constitutional Monarchy to a Republic.

Until he fell ill last month, Sir Ellis remained the active exemplar of dignity and patriotism and our nation and citizens are truly forever indebted to him for all that he has given to us in every form.

As Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, I wish to extend, on my behalf, that of my family's and of the Government's, our heartfelt sympathies over Sir Ellis's passing to his three children, grandchildren and all other family members, as well as his near and dear ones.

May God be with you all during this time of grief and loss and may you all be comforted in the knowledge that, as Mother Theresa once said, "Death is nothing else but going home to God, the bond of love will be unbroken for all eternity."

To the citizens of Trinidad and Tobago, I say we have lost a national hero but we should be assured that while great people must die, death can never kill their names.

The Government will give this great son of the soil and the veritable Grandfather of our Nation a State funeral, as is befitting his status and accomplishments as one of Trinidad and Tobago's greatest legal and academic minds and a contributor to nation building.

Additionally, the National Flag will be flown at half mast, to indicate that we are a nation in mourning, until the day when Sir Ellis is laid to final rest.

Again, let me reiterate that we are indeed a nation is mourning and Sir Ellis's great legacy shall always endure.

May his soul rest in peace.

I thank you.

Message of condolence from HM The Queen to the President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago following the death of Sir Ellis Clarke

"It is with great sadness that I learnt of the recent death of the former Governor General and first President of Trinidad & Tobago, Sir Ellis Clarke. Sir Ellis was a true statesman who served his country with distinction. His expertise in constitutional matters helped to form the modern Trinidad and Tobago, which I have fond memories of visiting last year.

I wish to convey to his family and to the people of Trinidad & Tobago my deepest sympathy."

ELIZABETH R

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas meets Don Navarro, Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedforth

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago met with Don Navarro and Mrs Navarro, Mayor and Mayoress of Nuneaton and Bedworth on 04 February 2011 at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London.

His Excellency welcomed the Mayor who in turn gave some background on his achievements and his rise to the post of Mayor of Nuneaton and Bedworth which is one of the largest boroughs in the United Kingdom.

Mayor Don Navarro was born in Laventille, Trinidad. He qualified as a General Nurse at the Port-of-Spain General School of Nursing and subsequently, as a Psychiatric Nurse at the St. Anns Psychiatric Hospital, St Anns.

He left Trinidad and Tobago in 1984 to further his studies and entered the University of Cardiff. He graduated and became a Nurse Teacher. He taught at various Schools of Nursing in the UK. In 1989 he attended the University of Wolverhampton where he attained his Bachelor of Education with Honours.

In 1992, he attended the University of Warwick, where he completed a Post-Graduate Programme in Sociological research in Health Care. By this time he had joined the Teaching Staff at the University of Coventry as a Senior Lecturer. There he was able to consolidate his knowledge and reputation as a teacher, leading several modules for students enrolled in Under-Graduate and Post-Graduate Courses.

H.E. Garvin Nicholas greets Don Navarro and Jennifer Navarro, Mayor and Mayoress of Nuneaton and Bedworth.

Mayor Don Navarro is married and the proud father of Don Jr. He is currently involved in voluntary work in his community as he always has a desire to give something back to society, a quality he developed in Trinidad and Tobago where he had worked tirelessly with the YMCA. That involvement in community engagement, led him to join the Labour Party and, in 2002, was elected for the first time as the Ward Councillor for Exhall, in the Borough of Nuneaton and Bedworth.

He became the first person of Caribbean origin to be so elected in that Borough and, since that time, he has held various positions of responsibility in the Local Labour Party, including Cabinet Member and Portfolio Holder; Chair and Vice-Chair of Committees and has defended his seat successfully over two further Local Government Elections. In 2010, he achieved the outstanding distinction of being elected to the position of First Citizen of the Borough, which carried with it the role of Mayor and Chair of the Council.

The Mayor also informed that he took part in the Bedford Carnival to the delight and fascination of the town people who were all interested in knowing about the Carnival celebrations in Trinidad and Tobago.

The meeting placed emphasis on the Mayor's commitment to Trinidad and Tobago and his willingness to work with the High Commissioner in raising the profile of the country in whatever way he can. He informed that he is willing to speak to the youth in Trinidad and Tobago and to offer his services in whatever field they were needed.

The High Commissioner spoke about the many challenges and the various goals that he has set himself since becoming High Commissioner. He and the Mayor both agreed that more must be done to raise the profile of Trinidad and Tobago.

Foreign Exchange rates

APRIL 2011

CURRENCY	BUYING	SELLING	CASH
Great British Pound	10.1386	10.5593	9.6336
United States Dollar	6.2440	6.4001	6.000
European Euro	8.6397	9.0123	8.1147
Canadian Dollar	6.3519	6.6496	6.1169

H.E. Garvin Nicholas meets with Richard Barnes, The Deputy Mayor of London

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago met with Mr. Richard Barnes, the Deputy Mayor of London on 04 January 2010 at the Mayor's London Office.

Also in attendance at the meeting were Muniza Mirza, Mayoral Advisor on Arts and Culture, Lan Feng, Senior Co-ordinator, International Affairs and Beverley Awonaya, Assistant Attaché Public Affairs, Culture and Tourism, Trinidad and Tobago High Commission.

The Deputy Mayor welcomed the High Commissioner to his office and the two held cordial talks about the High Commissioner's time in London so far. The High Commissioner also spoke about the importance of meeting and forming a working relationship with the Deputy Mayor in light of the large Caribbean Diaspora in London. The Deputy Mayor acknowledged that a significant percentage of Caribbean people live in London and practise a way of life which was reminiscent of the Caribbean.

The High Commissioner took the opportunity to discuss a number of initiatives for promoting Trinidad and Tobago. These included raising the profile of the Nottinghill Carnival and establishing a 'village' to showcase Trinidad and Tobago during the 2012 London Olympic period. The Deputy Mayor suggested that the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission invite other Caribbean countries to be part of this showcasing. The High Commissioner in agreement said that this would encourage a good working relationship among all and undertook to raise it with his Caribbean colleagues.

It was noted that 2012 is also the year in which Trinidad and Tobago as well as Jamaica celebrate their 50th year of Independence. The High Commissioner informed the Deputy Mayor of his plans to hold a number of events to highlight the occasion. These events included a Church Service, Gala Dinner and Award Ceremony to honour nationals living in the UK and other accredited countries.

The High Commissioner spoke about the diversity of Trinidad and Tobago and all that it has to offer. He said that the large program of work for 2012 has to be managed but Trinidad & Tobago has the experience and is culturally the most diverse in the Caribbean. We have street performers, musicians, masqueraders and large Carnival costumes that reflect the medley of facets in our culture. There are many things we can assist the Mayor's Office with and this would be of mutual benefit to all.

pictured: *H.E. Garvin Nicholas meets with Richard Barnes, The Deputy Mayor of London.*
Photo: Beverley Awonaya

Carivog International UK is inviting applicants aged 18yrs -29yrs to participate in the annual Trinidad & Tobago UK Cultural Showcase under the patronage of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission.

Applicants must be residing in the United Kingdom, aged between 18 to 29 years, of Trinidad & Tobago parentage (at least one parent). The Grand Showcase will be held in London on 10th September 2011 at the Carnival Village, Nottinghill London.

First prize is a trip to the twin islands and lots more

Apply now for 2011 and be part of the journey of self-discovery and intellectual development as you learn to interact with others, develop your people skills as you participate in holistic workshops and various guest appearances.

Contact: Angela-Sheanna **Tel:** 0208 875 9975 or 07958336694 or **email:** misstntuk @ carivog.com or misstrinidadandtobagouk@ hotmail.com **web:** www.misstntuk.com

Ms. *Melanie Peterkin-Philip*
Ms T&T UK 2010

H.E. Garvin Nicholas & Mr. Michael Larry Romany of TTOC discuss Olympics

On Friday 14th January 2011, the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee president Mr. Larry Romany met with High Commissioner H.E. Garvin Nicholas, at his offices in Belgrave Square, London.

The focal point of their meeting was Trinidad and Tobago's participation in next year's 2012 Olympic Games in London.

Among the topics of discussion were the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago during the Olympic Games (an initiative to be taken up by the High Commission) and training venues for the TT team during the quadrennial event.

"Ensuring that Trinidad and Tobago's sport, culture and tourism are well-represented in London at the time of the Games, is an opportunity that the TTOC will not want the country to forego," said Romany in a media release.

"At previous Olympic Games, it has been a frustrating experience getting the required support from the relevant authorities and decision-makers," he continued. "The year 2012 has exciting possibilities."

Romany a long-serving sporting administrator said, he was grateful that High Commissioner Nicholas was enthusiastic and keen to see Trinidad and Tobago perform at next year's Games. Romany pointed out: "TT made their Olympic debut at the 1948 London Olympics,"

"Rodney Wilkes earned our first Olympic medal. The city of London has a special place in Trinidad and Tobago's Olympic history."

The Trinidad and Tobago pre-Games training camp will be based in Cardiff, Wales, and it is expected that they will be there for a month.

01: *H.E. Garvin Nicholas met with Mr. Michael Larry Romany, President TTOC during his visit to the UK in the lead up to 2012 Olympics.* **02:** *'Mr. Michael Larry Romany addresses attendees at TTOC Annual Awards on the 29th December, 2010.* **03:** *(L-R) Mr. Christian Homer, Mr. Roger Daniel, the Hon. Anil Roberts, Minister of Sport and Youth Affairs, Mrs. Cleopatra Borel Brown, Ms. Shanntol Ince, Ms. Cherelle Thompson and Mr. Rudolph Jack*

Women as Agents of Change: Educating Women, Transforming Society

On Monday 14Th March, a parliamentary conference on "Educating Women, Transforming Society" was held to mark Commonwealth Day and the Centenary of International Women's Day at the House of Commons in London. The meeting included major contributions from a number of high level speakers from across the Commonwealth who debated on the role of governments, non-governmental organisations and the private sector in bringing education to girls and women.

Commonwealth Chair-in-Office, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister, spoke on the role of women's education in transforming society. Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar said: "We are here to celebrate the achievements of the Commonwealth and we are also here to recognise the challenges we face. Women in the Commonwealth can see through the glass ceiling and they are impatient to achieve equality which they know is theirs by right."

The Hon. Prime Minister was joined by Mr. Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General; Dr. Sylvia Anie, Director of the Social Transformation Programmes Division at the Commonwealth Secretariat and responsible for the Gender, Education and Health Sections; Ms. Harriet Harman MP, Labour MP for Camberwell and Peckham, Shadow Secretary of State for International Development and Shadow Deputy Prime Minister.

Representatives at the conference included Soroptimist International, Camfed, the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts, London South Bank University, Forum for African Women Educationalists, University of Southampton, Plan International UK, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the Council for Education in the Commonwealth, Global Campaign for Education and the UK Government's Department for International Development.

Conference participants discussed some of the practical solutions to getting girls into school, including mentoring systems, improving the safety of girls travelling to and from school, child care services and alumni schemes for those who have achieved success to inspire others.

Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar also highlighted some of the steps that were needed to ensure Commonwealth women gained equal access to education so they could become agents of change including: collective action to better harness resources for women; overcoming discrimination that leads to boys getting priority access to education; incentivising school attendance for girls; reforming the curriculum to ensure girls have access to all subjects including science and sport; and supporting mothers who wanted to continue their education to help their own children.

She added: "The lack of critical mass of women parliamentarians and heads of government is important as it has huge implications to ensuring legislation and policies are in place to promote the interests of women and men."

Mr. Sharma said: "The challenge is clear and simple: 70 million Commonwealth children are out of education, of which two-thirds are girls. Give women secondary education and their health improves, they have fewer children and they are more productive economically and engaged politically and socially."

Ms. Harman launched the 'Call to Action: Women – Agents of Change', which asked participants to call on Commonwealth governments to close the gender gap in access to education, provide women with equal access to complete secondary school, ensure all sectors of education have trained teaching and support staff, support pastoral policies, ensure education programmes in all sectors reject cultural stereotyping of women, introduce employment legislation to ensure women's economic rewards reflect their academic achievements and abilities, to end the discrimination that holds back women at work, to ensure equality in decision-making on education, and to commit to achieving equal representation of women in Commonwealth Parliaments, governments and intergovernmental agencies.

Pictured: *(from left) Rt Hon Baroness Hayman, the Lord Speaker of the House of Lords, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar and Mrs Sally Keeble, Labour MP for Northampton North and Chair of the Council for Education in the Commonwealth.*
Photo: Donald M. Chambers

BUSINESS DIALOGUE AND RECEPTION HOSTED FOR T&T TRADE DELEGATION

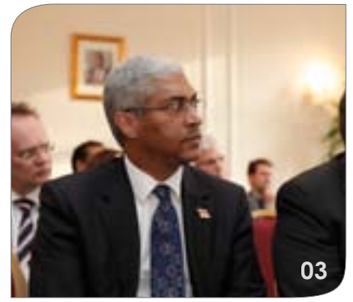
On Thursday 17th March, 2011, on the occasion of the visit of The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and visiting business delegation to London, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London hosted a Business Dialogue and Reception on behalf of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

The specially invited guests and delegates were welcomed to the event by Mr. Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry who then introduced His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, London.
In his opening remarks, the High Commissioner took the opportunity to outline the role which the High Commission plays in furthering the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's trade and investment goals and highlighted the compelling reasons for investing in our twin island Republic.

Following the High Commissioner's opening remarks, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar in her feature address presented an overview of the opportunities available in Trinidad and Tobago. These included opportunities "for business in the definition and development stages", "investment in areas that are ripe for activity" and in the markets that surround Trinidad and Tobago for which Trinidad and Tobago can be "used as the spring board to the Americas and further afield."

The programme continued with presentations by Mr. Larry Howai, Chief Executive Officer of First Citizen's Bank Limited, Mr. Gervase Warner, Chief Executive Officer, Neal & Massy Group of Companies, Mr. Gerry Brooks, Chief Operating Officer of Ansa McAl Group, Mr. Roberto Peon, Chief Executive Officer of Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT), Mr. Derek Chin, Chairman of Da Chin Enterprises and Ms. Catherine Kumar, President of the Trinidad and Tobago Chamber of Commerce.

The Honourable Stephen Cadiz, Minister of Trade and Industry delivered the closing remarks. During the reception, members of the T&T business delegation were provided with an opportunity to network with the British businessmen and women in attendance.



01: *A cross section of the guests at the Business Dialogue and Reception.* **02:** *The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister delivering the feature address* **03:** *His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner.* **04: (R-L)** *Mr. Carl Francis, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Trade and Industry with Mrs. Cadiz, wife of the Minister of Trade and Industry.* ***05:*** *The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister greets some of the representatives of the business community in the UK during the meet and greet session.*

Photos: Donald M. Chambers
Lawson C. Lovell

Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2011

Energising Local Economies: Partnerships For Prosperous Communities

The Commonwealth Local Government Conference 2011 (CLGC 2011) was a four-day (15th -18th March 2011, City Hall, Cardiff, Wales) international conference to look at local government's role in local economic development and successful strategies for driving and delivering prosperous communities.

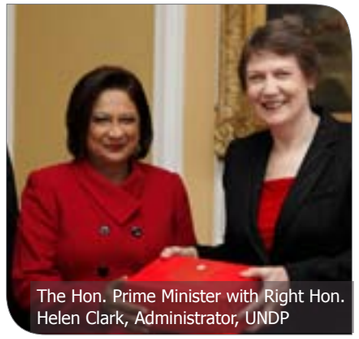
(L-R) Ms. Roanna Gopaul, Counsellor, Ms. Nickesha Smith, Second Secretary and H.E. Garvin Nicholas, High Commissiner

CLGC 2011 followed highly successful previous events held in Freeport, Grand Bahama in 2009, Auckland, New Zealand in 2007, and in Aberdeen, Scotland in 2005. The outcomes of these conferences have been endorsed by Commonwealth Heads of Governments and are helping central governments and local governments to strengthen their governance and democratic processes and to deliver better services.

Among the speakers at the event were: The Right Hon. Helen Clark, Administrator, UNDP, H.E. Kamalesh Sharma, Commonwealth Secretary-General, The Hon. Kamla Persad-Bissessar, Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and Chairperson-in-Office of the Commonwealth, The Hon. David Cameron MP, Prime Minister, UK, the Hon. Carwyn Jones, First Minister for Wales, Dame Margaret Eaton, Chairman, Local Government Association of England and Wales Cllr Rodney Berman, Leader, Cardiff Council, Ministers, mayors and local government leaders, business leaders and experts from across the Commonwealth.
This conference sought to:

- help promote the role of local government in local economic development
- highlight the role of central/ state government in setting the national policy framework and an enabling environment to ensure that local economic development supports national priorities
- consider the role of local authorities in energising local economies, including facilitating
- economic growth to tackle poverty and improve the quality of life of citizens

look at ways in which councils are partnering with the private sector to boost inward investment, jobs and skills. The conference presented



The Hon. Prime Minister with Right Hon. Helen Clark, Administrator, UNDP

a number of case studies on issues such as long-term visioning and planning, small business support, procurement, gender, skills development and the impact of HIV/AIDS. These were also offers of study visits to some exciting and innovative local economic development projects in and around Cardiff.

The outcomes of the discussions will be drawn together as guidelines to support those involved in local government in developing and implementing strategies for local economic development, and after endorsement at the CLGF General Meeting would inform CLGF policy. They would then be presented to Commonwealth Heads of Government for endorsement at their meeting in Perth later in 2011.

(L-R) Mr. Shem Baldeosingh, Special Advisor to the Prime Minister, Mr Basil Morrison, Immediate Past CLGF Chairperson, H.E. Garvin Nicholas, Prime Minister Persad-Bissessar, The Hon. Winston Peters, The Hon. Chandresh Sharma and Dr. The Hon. Surujattan Rambachan

Ceremony for the Presentation of The President's Medals

On February 2, 2011, His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards hosted a ceremony on the occasion of the Presentation of The President's Medals at Knowsley, Port Of Spain. Also in attendance was Dr. The Hon. Tim Gopeesingh, Minister of Education.

02

01

01: *His Excellency Professor George Maxwell Richards congratulates Brad Chattergoon and Jonelle Humphrey, both recipients of the President's Medal for higher secondary school education open category.* **02:** (R-L) are Khalid Mohammed, Jonelle Humphrey, Minister of Education Dr. Tim Gopeesingh, President George Maxwell Richards, Brad Chattergoon, Dachelle Morrison, Candace Coker and Terron Charles. All the students were recipients of medals. ***Photos -*** *courtesy The Government Information Service Limited (GISL)*

3M Security Systems Debuts World's First Multilateral Border Crossing Programme To be Used in Caribbean

Deployment of CARIPASS programme allows quick, secure travel between Caribbean nations

Travelers between participating nations of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) will enjoy faster, hassle-free travel due to a novel border security programme designed by 3M Security Systems. CARIPASS, the first multilateral border crossing programme in the world, is a voluntary travel card programme that provides secure and simple border crossings for citizens and legal residents of ten CARICOM nations. With the introduction of CARIPASS, participating governments aim to enhance regional security and support expedited travel throughout the participating Member States.

To participate in CARIPASS, eligible travelers must pre-enroll at local immigration or designated offices, and have a facial image and two fingerprint images captured. Users are then issued a card with a 2D barcode which they can use to electronically process through self-service border crossing gates. These gates are connected to the system's user database, and after matching the user's biometric data with that on the card, the gates open, allowing the traveler to pass through. The gate prints a receipt for the traveler to document his or her valid entry.

CARIPASS utilizes a number of new technologies sourced and integrated by 3M in response to CARICOM's needs, allowing travelers to move quickly between ten CARICOM nations: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, St. Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago.

"This one-of-a-kind programme which is premised on the cooperation of multiple sovereign states will help facilitate the efficient movement of travelers, while maintaining a high level of security," said Ms. Lynne Anne Williams, Executive Director, CARICOM IMPACS. "In working with 3M Security Systems, we were able to achieve a customized solution specific to our security needs and goals. We look forward to future phases of the system and extending it to other CARICOM Member States."

The creation of the programme began after the successful implementation of a similar

Photo: 3M

pictured: *'Self-service border crossing gates process CARIPASS designed by 3M.*

system used during the 2007 Cricket World Cup. After gaining a thorough understanding of the nature of travel between the participating countries and CARICOM's goals in expediting this traffic, security experts at 3M were able to introduce a whole solution.

One of the key components of the system is the new electronic immigration gate, the 3M Autogate Solution. Autogates automate the border clearance process, allowing CARICOM to focus its immigration resources on higher risk travelers, while low risk travelers/CARIPASS holders benefit from quick and convenient processing.

About 3M Security Systems Division

3M Security Systems Division is a trusted partner and industry leader in delivering end-to-end, innovative security solutions to businesses and governments worldwide—helping to ensure the security of people, documents and goods. 3M uses its broadband knowledge, in-depth experience and technological expertise to help solve an array of security challenges, including brand protection, product security, efficient passenger check-in, secure ID and passport document issuance and hardware and software system solutions for border management. 3M Security Systems technologies are used in over 100 countries around the world.

For more information about the 3M Security Systems, visit www.3M.com/Security and for CARIPASS, visit: www.caripass.org

Five years on - The CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CARICOM Secretariat, Turkeyen, Greater Georgetown, Guyana)

Press release NF01/2011 (28 January 2011), http://www.caricom.org/jsp/pressreleases/presnf01_11.jsp

January 2011 marked the fifth anniversary of the coming on stream of the CARICOM Single Market aspect of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME), the most ambitious initiative undertaken by the Caribbean Community.

The fledging enterprise has so far made significant strides in fulfillment of the vision of a seamless market space that better positions small vulnerable countries to meet the challenges of the current international environment. It has been compartmentalized into the Single Market that began in January 2006, and the CARICOM Single Economy which is targeted to become operational in 2015. Of the 15 CARICOM Member States, The Bahamas and Montserrat have not signalled their intention to participate in the CSME.

Haiti, though not yet on board, benefitted in December 2010 from a temporary trade concession arrangement under which it will be able to export within the Single Market on a non-reciprocal preferential basis for three years. The agreement at the last Meeting of the Council for Trade and Economic Development (COTED) for 2010, was a demonstration of the spirit of unity and community, in support of the French-speaking Member State which continues to suffer the effects of the devastating 12 January 2010 earthquake and the cholera outbreak that followed later in the year.

Over the five years since the CSM became operational, the free movement of skilled CARICOM nationals has moved from five initial categories to ten including the most recent - domestics. The ten categories under which skilled nationals can move without the need for work permits and visas are: university graduates; media workers; artistes; musicians; sportspersons; nurses; teachers; artisans; persons who are holders of Associate Degrees or equivalent; and household domestics who are holders of Caribbean Vocational Qualifications.

The number of Skilled National Certificates issued by Member States participating in the CSM act as a gauge on the status of the free movement of skills regime. Available statistics indicate that by 2009/2010, about 9 000 persons were issued Skilled National Certificates – the instrument that allows eligible categories to move – though not all may have used the Certificate. The majority of movers are women and the vast majority are university graduates

It is anticipated that there will be movement this year on the Contingent Rights, which are granted to a CARICOM national, his/her spouse and immediate dependent family members if the principal beneficiary has exercised the right of establishment, provision of services, movement of capital or free movement of skills.

With regard to movement of capital, data is limited but there have been some cross-border capital flows during the five years of the CSM, particularly in the equity markets and for investment in the manufacturing sector.

A steady increase in intra-regional trade had also been recorded between 2006 and 2008 from $2.2 billion US to $3.2 billion US. However, in 2009, due to a decline in the value of exports from the major trading Member State, Trinidad and Tobago, total trade appeared to decline, according to preliminary figures which do not include those for three Member States. The preliminary figure put total regional trade in 2009 at US$1.9B.

The achievements under the CSM are due in no small measure to a number of regional institutions that have been established to support the initiative. Among them are:

- the Caribbean Court of Justice (CCJ)
- the CARICOM Regional Organisation for Standards and Quality (CROSQ)
- the Caribbean Agricultural Health Food Safety Agency (CAHFSA)
- the CARICOM Competition Commission
- the CARICOM Development Fund (CDF)

The Board of the CDF recently authorised the provision of one-time grants of US$60,000 to the Government of Saint Lucia and US $30,000 to the Government of St Vincent and the Grenadines under its Emergency Disaster Assistance (EDA) facility. The emergency grants were to be applied to trade-related activities which were dislocated after the passage of Hurricane Tomas.

In July 2010, the CDF Board approved a CAP of US$6.1 million for the Government of Saint Lucia and in September approved US$4.2 million for St Vincent and the Grenadines. The Government of Belize has also been approved to receive US$3.2 million.

The Barbados-based CARICOM Development Fund, which began operations inn 2009, was established under Article 158 of the Revised Treaty of Chaguaramas to address the disadvantages arising from the implementation of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy (CSME) process.

In addition to the institutions above, national accreditation bodies to ensure common standards and measures for accreditation and equivalency, and national and regional regulatory and administrative structures were also established as part of the support mechanisms for the CSM.

While the CSME has not yet attained the level its framers had envisaged when it was put on the table at Grand Anse, Grenada in 1989, the initiative is working. Stakeholders at a Convocation held two years ago under the Chairmanship of then Prime Minister of Barbados the late Hon David Thompson, Lead Head of Government with responsibility for the CSME, acknowledged progress on the CSME, but also recognized that there was need for greater involvement of the private sector and labour. They conceded that there were national capacity limitations to drive some of the processes critical to the effective functioning of the CSME.

An audit that formed the basis of discussions at the Convocation identified five basic challenges that were affecting the pace at which the CSME was progressing. Those areas were:

- surviving the current global economic downturn and emerging from it as a transformed and more resilient Community committed to its original purpose;

- strengthening the market integration process and stimulating increased cross-border activity, especially in favour of the Member States with negative trade balances;

- increased investment to build up the general infrastructure and for increased production and job creation;

- mobilizing adequate resources for implementing effective Community sectoral and other progammes to sustain the supply of skills and for export expansion;

- reaching agreement on mobilizing adequate resources and execution of a scheduled plan of action for implementation of the macroeconomic and other measures to establish the single economic space.

The Community is moving to address these and other challenges such as in the areas of the provision of adequate transportation services for goods and persons; in addressing regional concerns about crime, drugs and energy prices; financial and capacity constraints; and matters of governance.

However this year, the scheme will endeavour to gradually reduce of the number of challenges that hinder the maturity and effectiveness of the CARICOM Single Market and Economy.

The objectives of the CSME are:

- Improved standards of living and work
- Full employment of labour and other factors of production
- Accelerated, coordinated and sustained economic development and convergence
- Expansion of trade and economic relations with Third States
- Enhanced levels of international competitiveness
- Organisation for increased production and productivity

The core components of the Single Market are the free movement of goods, services, capital, specified categories of skilled CARICOM Nationals and the Right of Establishment.

TTBizLink Phase One Launched

In February, 2011, The Ministry of Trade and Industry (MTI) launched Phase I of the Single Electronic Window (SEW) project - the introduction of the system's brand name - TTBizlink, and the onset of registration for prospective users of the portal.

From February 4th, companies and individuals have been able to sign up to familiarize themselves with the modules and register to use the system. The website is **www.ttbizlink.gov.tt**. Information is also available on the MTI website - www.tradeind.gov.tt.

The registration process was conducted in conjunction with the Ministry of Public Administration's (MPA) ttconnect service. MTI is pleased to have partnered with MPA in delivering this critical service to companies and individuals who wish to access government business services. Indeed the entire implementation process has been a collaborative effort between MTI, MPA and several public and private sector agencies and organisations.

TTBizlink is an IT platform which allows business persons and government agencies responsible for trade to interact online. The process is quite simple - companies/ individuals who wish to import/export goods, apply for business permits and licences, register a business or conduct any other trade related activity can simply submit a single document online at the TTBizLink website. This is then routed to the relevant government agencies for their approval, which is also received online.

According to the Minister of Trade and Industry, the Hon. Stephen Cadiz, "TTBizLink will reduce the time for processing of trade related applications from 15 to 30 days to one week and eventually two to three days. This will enhance the competitiveness of our businesses and make Trinidad and Tobago an even more attractive place for business and investment".

More than just an IT solution, TTBizLink is an entire national change management process that will modernize the way companies connect with government agencies in the process of conducting business and trade. The new system will connect five Government Ministries and 13 Government Departments/Agencies all involved in the trade process.

01: *TTBizLink brand image is revealed at the launch* **02:** *Minister Cadiz looks at a digital interactive display of the website created by Digital Media Consultant Roger Kirton.*
Photos courtesy *www.tradeind.gov.tt*

Goverment offers TT$20M incentives to Farmers in T&T

On Friday 7th February, 2011, at a stakeholders and media appreciation function at Chaud Restaurant, Queen's Park West, Port-of-Spain, the Honourable Vasant Bharath, Minister of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs, revealed that the Government in a bid to ensure the sustainability of local agriculture has pumped some $20 million into greenhouse farming via loans from the Agricultural Development Bank (ADB.)

The Hon. Minister urged nationals to "see" a bright and promising future in agriculture. Minister Bharath described 2011 as a year of action, and said his Ministry had undertaken a five-pronged mandate to:

- reduce the food import bill, hovering around $4 billion for several years
- reduce inflation, primarily driven by food prices
- create sustainable, long-term, productive employment
- contribute to the diversification of the economy
- increase the country's food security.

Minister Bharath said, "This is apt, as over the next few decades, agriculture will be a fundamental contributor to economic growth, poverty reduction and environmental sustainability on a global basis". The Honourable Minister identified more efficient infrastructure and irrigation methods as priorities. "Through our Land and Water Development Division, we will install 250 on-farm irrigation ponds to address the water management challenges experienced by our farmers," he revealed.

"We have already begun installing large pumps on the banks of the Caroni River to provide water to several hundred farmers; and the work of desilting rivers and cleaning drains has already begun in collaboration with the Ministries of Works and Transport and Local Government." Minister Bharath also pledged to construct 200 kilometres of agricultural access roads to provide better mobility to and from farm lands.

Regarding the issue of land management, the Honourable Minister said he was "saddened" that there were applications backed up in the system for 35 to 40 years. "The new Commissioner of State Lands has been given a mandate to clear this backlog within 12 months," he said. As part of the incentive package to farmers, Minister Bharath said the Ministry Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs had focused on profitability adding. "The ministry's Planning Division is currently working on a revised incentive package to be launched and implemented by the end of the first quarter of 2011, inclusive of special consideration for youths in agriculture," Minister Bharath said. Citing the citrus and cocoa industries as vital, he said a revitalisation was urgently needed to properly market the crops.

the Honourable Minister said the Government will make available,

pictured: *Senator the Honourable Vasant Bharath, Minister of Food Production, Land and Marine Affairs.*

through Trinidad and Tobago's Agricultural Services Division, disease-free planting material to resuscitate both the cocoa and citrus industries. To ensure that large farms were fully-operational, he said, through the large farm co-ordinator, the Ministry would collaborate closely with the eight operators to guarantee that at least five of these farms were running smoothly by the end of this year.

Standard & Poor's 'A' Rating Affirmed on Trinidad and Tobago

On January 14th, 2011, Standard & Poor's Ratings Services said it affirmed its 'A' foreign currency and 'A+' local currency long-term sovereign credit ratings on the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. At the same time, Standard & Poor's affirmed its 'A-1' short-term ratings. The long-term rating outlook remains stable, and the 'AA' transfer and convertibility assessment is unchanged.

"The ratings on the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago reflect a solid external and fiscal profile resulting from several years of high energy prices, as well as significant off-budget and contingent liabilities," said Standard & Poor's credit analyst Roberto Sifon Arevalo. "The government's external and fiscal flexibility give it room to deal with the global economic crisis and the bankruptcy of one of the country's largest financial conglomerates, CL Financial Group."

Based on these factors, as well as improved economic growth prospects (expectations for GDP to grow 2.5% in 2011), Standard & Poor's expect that the general government deficit will edge down to 2.6% of GDP in fiscal 2011 (year-end Sept. 30) from 2.8% in fiscal 2010. The 2010 figure includes transfers to the Heritage and Stabilization Fund (HSF) of about 2% of GDP, and it is down sharply from 5.8% in fiscal 2009, when the economy contracted by 3.5%. Including the government's latest plan to bail out investors at CLFG's life insurance company, Colonial Life Insurance Co. (CLICO), Standard & Poor's expects net general government debt will rise to 28% of GDP in fiscal 2011 from 15% in fiscal 2010, though it will remain below the 36% median for 'A' rated sovereigns.

The stable outlook reflects Standard & Poor's expectation

that the government will be able to muddle through its intervention in the CLFG bankruptcy without further eroding its balance sheet. Improvements in transparency, governance, and regulation in the financial industry and among public-sector enterprises, in particular, could lead Standard & Poor's to raise its ratings on Trinidad and Tobago over the medium term. On the other hand, fiscal deterioration, as well as further slippages in the pace of restructuring government-owned entities, could lead Standard & Poor's to lower the ratings.

Ratings Affirmed

Trinidad and Tobago (Republic of) Sovereign Credit Rating

- Foreign Currency A/Stable/A-1
- Local Currency A+/Stable/A-1
- Transfer & Convertibility Assessment AA
- Senior Unsecured A
- Senior Unsecured A+

All ratings affected by this rating action can be found on Standard & Poor's public Web site at www.standardandpoors.com. Use the Ratings search box located in the left column.

BBC CARIBBEAN SERVICE MAKES ITS FINAL BROADCASTS

BBC Caribbean Service concluded its broadcasts on Saturday 25th March, 2011.

This follows a decision by BBC World Service as part of cuts which will amount to over 600 jobs. Other services being closed are the Albanian, Macedonian, Serbian, and Portuguese for Africa broadcasts.

A BBC press release said the closures were part of its response to a cut to its Grant-in-Aid funding from the UK's Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO).

The final week of broadcasting by the Caribbean Service included a regional call-in and discussion programme looking at the future of pan-Caribbean news and current affairs. The last editions of the morning and evening drivetime programmes of *BBC Caribbean Report* and *BBC Caribbean Magazine* were aired on the 25th March.

Rationale

Other cuts are being made in remaining World Service departments as part of the budget exercise. The cuts are part of a BBC World Service restructure in order to meet a 16% savings target announced in the Government's Spending Review of 20 October last year.

BBC Global News Director Peter Horrocks said: "These closures are not a reflection on the performance of individual services or programmes. They are all extremely important to their audiences and to the BBC.

"It is simply that there is a need to make savings due to the scale of the cuts to the World Service's Grant-in-Aid funding from the UK's Foreign & Commonwealth Office and we need to focus our efforts in the languages where there is the greatest need and where we have the strongest impact."

Controller, Languages at BBC World Service, Liliane Landor described BBC Caribbean as: "The Caribbean Service, one of the oldest and most distinguished services that the BBC has provided in English."

Profile

The Caribbean Service transmissions are used on 48 partner stations across the English, Spanish, and Dutch Caribbean and as part of the Caribbean stream on four FM relays in Jamaica, Trinidad, Barbados, and Antigua-Barbuda.

Listening in the Caribbean

Its flagship programmes were *BBC Caribbean Report* - morning and evening drivetime editions. The cultural programme *BBC Caribbean Magazine* has reflected the human side of the news as well as reporting on the region's music and literature. And *BBC Sports Caribbean* was provided by World Service for the Caribbean programme stream.

Programmes

BBCCARIBBEAN.com

The website www.bbccaribbean.com receives its biggest page impressions from the Caribbean diaspora in the US, Canada, and the UK.

History

The early roots of the Caribbean Service began in 1939. The programme Calling the West Indies featured West Indian troops on active service during World War Two to read letters on air to their families back home.

From 1943 to 1958, the programme became Caribbean Voices which highlighted West Indian writers. During this period, new writers, including VS Naipaul, George Lamming, Andrew Salkey and Samuel Selvon worked and produced their first works.

In 1949, the segment We see Britain was introduced as part of the programming for the Caribbean under the management of cricketer-turned-producer Ken Ablack.

The Service went on for the next three decades nurturing the

continued on page 24

Caribbean Energy & Environmental Sector Lunchtime Roundtable Meeting

On February 28, 2011, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London hosted the Caribbean Energy and Environmental Sector Lunchtime Roundtable Meeting: a networking forum to promote capacity building on the part of Caribbean Private Sector Environmental and Energy Management stakeholders. This meeting formed part of a project undertaken by the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce in conjunction with the Private Sector Organisation of Jamaica which is funded by Proinvest, an EU-ACP funding programme.

The meeting brought together five private sector representatives from Jamaica and five from Trinidad and Tobago, from the manufacturing, energy, tourism and environmental management sectors to meet with business interests from the British environmental and energy management sector to determine partnership opportunities. The High Commission was delighted to support the development of partnerships with British interests in energy and environmental management to develop new business opportunities in the Caribbean.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, London, delivered opening remarks, presenting an overview of the strides being made by the Government to make Trinidad and Tobago a 'green environment'. High Commissioner Nicholas underscored the importance of decreasing Trinidad and Tobago's reliance on the oil and gas sector by developing and utilising renewable energy resources including solar, wind and biomass technology.

The meeting continued under the leadership of Vernon Barrett, Gabrielle Gellineau, Trade Policy Advisor of the Caribbean Association of Industry and Commerce and Project Consultant; Omar Chedda, of the Private Sector Association of Jamaica. Insightful presentations were given by Trinidad and Tobago delegates: Robert Tang Yuk who represented the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturing Association; Joth Singh from the Environmental Management Association, Dax Driver from the Energy Chamber, and Dr Judith Gobin from the Asa Wright Nature Centre. The Jamaican delegation was ably represented by Valentine Fagan, of the Jamaica Public Service Company Limited; Denise Tulloch of the Petroleum Company of Jamaica; Rashid Bashir of Garbage Disposal and Sanitation Systems Limited; and David Barrett of EnBar Consulting.

Eloquent presentations were made during the meeting by eight leading British interests in the renewable energy sector, including the Private Sector Advisory Group, Environmental Technology, British Water, Cameron McKenna LLP, Maya Blue Limited, Interserve Industrial Services, ACTL Asset Management and Mott Mc Donald. The meeting ended with a networking session during which participants sought to match make their project needs with the capabilities of the companies represented.

The facilitation of this meeting was yet another initiative by High Commission London to advance the trade agenda and policy directives of the Government of Trinidad and Tobago.

pictured: *His Excellency Garvin Nicholas speaking at the lunchtime roundtable.* ***Photo****: Mrs Beverly Awonaya*

continued from page 22

talents of producers and presenters such as Louise Bennett, Jones P Madeira, and Trevor MacDonald. The Service was closed in the mid 1970s with *Caribbean Magazine* remaining on air, produced by a separate BBC department.

It was re-opened in 1988 as a news and current affairs department, later taking over Caribbean Magazine as part of the Caribbean stream of programming for the Caribbean. Its opening presentation team were Hugh Crosskill, Jerry Timmins, and Pat Whitehorne.

Current BBC Caribbean Service team

Debbie Ransome, Head of BBC Caribbean Service said: "After one of our best years ever editorially, this has been a great blow for the team here."

"Given what we know BBC Caribbean means for providing pan-Caribbean coverage for a strong radio audience, plus the online links it provides between the Caribbean and its Diaspora, and the amount of goodwill it brought for the BBC from a loyal audience, clearly a void will be left."

Music from Oil Drums (1956)
produced by Toshi & Peter Seeger

Long unavailable, this black and white film presents Mr. Pete Seeger (who wrote a manual for playing steel drums) visiting steel drum makers and players in Port of Spain, Trinidad in 1950s. He was inspired to make the film because he "found the process of tuning the pans particularly interesting".

This movie is part of the collection from Academic Film Archive of North America. *Music from Oil Drums* was produced by Toshi and Peter Seeger with sponsorship from Mr. Andrew Lowd. The movie was distributed by the Folkways Production Company in 1956.

To view **the movie** visit the Academic Film Archive of North America website: **http://www.archive.org/details/MusicFromOilDrums**

Alternatively it can be viewed on youtube at: **http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PM7JjNwKg3s&feature=player_embedded**

Photo: http://www.tropicalphotosbylarson.com

Pictured: *Pigeon Point Pier, Pigeon Point, Tobago*

Tobago Offers Rebate To Scandinavian Travelers

The Tobago House of Assembly has launched a rebate for Scandinavian travellers, equivalent to the £100 offered to visitors from the UK. Visitors from Scandinavia holidaying in Tobago for two-weeks or more can access the incentive which is aimed at attracting more visitors to the island. Available through travel agencies in Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, the incentive is also promoted online directly to the travel and trade consumers visiting **www.gotrinidadandtobago.dk.** The Danish language website, which promotes and markets the destination, will also be accessible in Norwegian and Swedish versions.

Trinidad & Tobago Carnival 2011 Results

Former Junior Calypso Monarch Karene Asche became the first woman to win the National Calypso Monarch crown in almost a decade, and in the process made history by taking home the competition's largest ever cash prize of TT $2 million.

At the age of 26, Asche now becomes the youngest ever National Calypso Monarch in the competition's recent history. However, Neville "Growling Tiger" Marcano still holds the all-time record for youngest monarch for when he, at the age of 24, won the crown in 1939, the year the annual competition first began.

Asche, who won the Junior Calypso Monarch competitions in 1998 and 2003, took home the crown at Dimanche Gras with her rendition of calypsos *"Uncle Jack"* and *"Careful What Yuh Ask For"*.

She is the fourth woman to win the Calypso Monarch crown, after Calypso Rose (McArtha Lewis) in 1978, Denyse Plummer in 2001 and Singing Sandra in 1999 and 2003.

In other competitions held in the Dimanche Gras final, Veteran masquerader Wade Madray was crowned National Carnival King 2011. Mr. Madray's Pacific Tsunami from the band 'Legacy', led from the preliminary stages of the competition. The costume, a stunning depiction in several shades of blue, was the largest in the competition.

Mrs. Peola Marchan for the second time won the coveted crown of National Carnival Queen 2011. Mrs. Marchan beat her nine rivals with her costume "D Jewelled Chandelier" from the band D Big Band - Sel Duncan at Palms (We People International) to walk away with the title. In 2007, Mrs. Marchan won her first National Queen of the Band title with her costume 'Dante's Inferno'. On Wednesday 2nd March, 2011, Marchan also copped her seventh title as South Queen of the Bands San Fernando.

PANORAMA 2011

MEDIUM CONVENTIONAL STEEL BANDS

1st Valley Harps and Katzenjammers
2nd Buccaneers
3rd Courts Laventille Sound Specialists

LARGE CONVENTIONAL STEEL BANDS

1st All Stars
2nd Exodus
3rd Silver Stars

pictured at right: *Mrs Marchan in 'D Jewelled Chandelier' costume at Dimanche Gras.* **Photo:** Newsday.co.tt

National Calypso Monarch 2011 results

Photo: courtesy GISL - www.news.gov.tt

1st **1st placeKarene Asche** with the calypsoes *'Uncle Jack'* and *'Careful What Yuh Ask For'*

2nd **Michael "Sugar Aloes" Osouna** with the calypsoes *'De Cause'* and *'Not One Word'*

3rd **Dr. Hollis "Chalkdust" Liverpool** with the calypso *'Wounded Pride' and 'Power Of The Pen'*

above: *Mr. Stephen Creese, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of Local Government with Ms. Karen Ashe, Calypso Monarch 2011 and an employee of the Ministry who received a bouquet from the Hon. Chandresh Sharma, Minister of Local Government*

MASQUERADE WINNERS 2011

KING OF CARNIVAL

1st Wade Madray ("Pacific Tsunami") - 421 pts.
2nd Owen Hinds Jr ("Battle of the Marabuntas") - 420 pts.
3rd Curtis Eustace ("Bozo-D Legend Lives On") - 416 pts.

QUEEN OF CARNIVAL

1st Peola Marchan ("D Jeweled Chandelier") - 416 pts.
2nd Gloria Dallsingh ("Splendor Of Lights") - 414 pts.
3rd Kay Mason ("Island Queen") - 407 pts.

INTERNATIONAL SOCA MONARCH 2011

1st **Machel Montano HD** with the soca song *'Advantage'*
2nd **Fay Ann Lyons** with the soca song *'Consider It Done'*
3rd **Bunji Garlin** with the soca song 'Hold *A Burn'*

INTERNATIONAL GROOVY SOCA MONARCH 2011

1st **Kees** with the soca song '*Wotless'*
2nd **Benjai** with the soca song *'Trini'*
3rd **Destra** with the soca song *'Cool It Down'*

Sylvia Maharaj, Waltham Forest Magistrate

Sylvia Maharaj, a national of Trinidad and Tobago, came to the United Kingdom in August 1963. She joined the Waltham Forest Magistrate's Court in 1989 where she became secretary of the Justice's Club and served for 5 years, during which time she joined the Minority Ethnic Study group where they were tasked with writing advisory procedures supporting the integration of Black People in Magistrates' Courts. Later the Minority Ethnic Study group wrote a book on this subject.

Ms. Maharaj was also a member of several committees, covering Probation, Bench Training and Development, plus the main courts. She attended seminars and addressed communities across London to build awareness and promote being a magistrate.

In 2000, Sylvia Maharaj was elected the first Minority Ethnic Chairperson of the Licensing Committee and served for four years in this capacity while she introduced key changes dealing with licensing in the community, alongside local issues.

Ms. Maharaj was involved with the shadowing scheme introduced by Operation Black Vote to assist members of minority communities in becoming magistrates. In five years, fifty members of the community became magistrates. In addition to raising awareness, she spoke at many seminars.

For seven years she was a member of the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Committee at Newham, interviewing prospective magistrates. After interviewing with other members, ensuring they met the key qualities, they were recommended to the Lord Chancellors Department for possible appointment. Ms. Maharaj attended meetings and seminars across London where she spoke about her role as a Minority Ethnic Magistrate.

During the initial stages of becoming a Magistrate, Ms. Maharaj encountered various forms of opposition, often related to gender and ethnicity. This was conquered by diplomacy, providing advice, and relying on her knowledge and confidence.

For the past nine years, she has been a member of the MET (Metropolitan Police) Central Independent Advisory Group on race where she continues to serve as an Independent Advisor, which includes facilitation of training Senior Police Officers at Hendon Training Centre. This helps ensure that they engage with the community on a daily basis.

(pictured) ***Sylvia Maharaj,*** *London Magistrate for more than 18 years.*

Currently, she is the chair of Community Consultative Forum representing the London wide Central Communications Command (CCC), which looks at how emergency calls are handled. In the last year, as "Critical Friends", they investigated the delay in calls being answered, the resulting effect on callers and the potential remedies. CCC has managed to reduce call answering time from 18 to 10 seconds. During a commendation ceremony in 2010, Ms. Sylvia Maharaj was asked to present Certificates to well-deserved members of staff and deliver a feature address in her capacity as Chair of the Community Consultative Forum.

As a member of the community, Ms. Maharaj proudly celebrates the achievements of the MET and believes through her contributions, and those of her peers, the community cohesion will be strengthened and sustained.

Caribbean Dinner Jazz

Venue: Carnival Village, Tabernacle, Powis Square, Notting Hill, W11 2AY
Tube: Ladbroke Grove, Notting Hill Gate
When: Sunday 15 May 2011 from 5pm - 9pm
Price: £20 includes dinner, desert and Jazz, £10 for Jazz only
Concessions: £2 off to Seniors, Youths (Under 18) and PUK Holders
Musical Content: Liam Teague, Cameron Pierre, Backed by the Engine Room Band and hosted by Cutty Williams

Tickets: Online here, or call 020 7193 5859

The Nationals Meetings

On the 26th January 2011, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London, hosted its first monthly nationals meeting for 2011. A large number of nationals residing in London and the surrounding areas were in attendance to meet the new High Commissioner of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

His Excellency spoke about what he hopes to achieve during his tenure with the help and support of nationals and the staff at the High Commission. He emphasised that he is keen to work with nationals and that he was here to increase the Mission's engagement with the Diaspora regardless of ethnicity, religion or historic political preferences and to carry out the Government's mandate on issues of trade, tourism and cultural expansion.

His Excellency also updated the nationals gathered on the high level of discussion being held by the Trinidad and Tobago Government and other Caribbean counterparts to resolve the issue of Air Passenger Duty (APD). Nationals were encouraged to do their part and write letters to their respective Members of Parliament to push for positive action.

One important point dealt with at the meeting was the fact that the High Commissioner wanted to engage with the young people especially the students studying in the UK. He explained that he wants to reach out to the students and get them more involved in the work of the Mission and to have the Mission provide a greater level of assistance to them.

The High Commissioner also discussed other issues affecting nationals. Some of these issues included the processing and distribution time of the machine readable passports and the problems encountered by students studying in the United Kingdom.

He also advised of the initiatives being undertaken by the Government to combat crime as well as a number of other key areas which included tourism with emphasis on sport tourism, trade, sport and youth development and the Olympics.

The High Commissioner made mention of plans to celebrate Trinidad and Tobago's 50th Anniversary of Independence and indicated that he would look forward to receiving the support of the Diaspora in all of the ventures to be undertaken. One venture mentioned was the formation of a 'Trinidad and Tobago Village' where all the aspects of Trinidad and Tobago's culture, religion, history and economic opportunities would be displayed and portrayed. A location for such a venture was already identified in London and the Trinidad and Tobago Olympic Committee is also involved.

Photos: Lawson C. Lovell

Photos: Lawson C. Lovell

Left: *H.E. Garvin Nicholas speaking with nationals after the meeting.* **Above:** *His Excellency Garvin Nicholas addressing nationals at his first monthly nationals meeting.*

The Nationals Meeting in May will be on Thursday 26th May 2011 at 6:30 p.m. instead of Wednesday 25th May.

This is a special meeting as The Honourable Therese Baptiste-Cornelis, Minister of Health, Trinidad and Tobago, will be the guest speaker. The Honourable Minister will be addressing the issue of opportunities in the Health Sector in Trinidad and Tobago. In this regard, the High Commission wishes to invite, among others, nationals who are health professionals or who have a keen interest in the health sector in Trinidad and Tobago.

CVQO AND EDUCATION CARIBBEAN YOUTH 'AT RISK'

Pictured: *(L-R) Admiral Lord West of Spithead, Capt. Dr. Wallace W. Williams, H.E. Garvin Nicholas High Commissioner and Lt Col Edwards Woods FCMI FInstLM*

On the 23rd February, 2011, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission in London partnered with the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation (CVQO) to launch the book and programme, CVQO and Education Caribbean Youth 'At Risk' at the second monthly nationals meeting.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas High Commissioner welcomed and addressed the nationals and invited guests before introducing feature guest Capt. Dr. Wallace W. Williams, CVQO Caribbean Liaison Officer. In His Exellency's address, he revealed, "The study done by Dr. Williams identifies that the entire Caribbean region is affected by 'at risk' youth who become involved in a criminal culture driven by drugs and guns." He expressed his sadness every time he read about the "youth crime plaguing society and the often senseless and permanent consequences that flow from it".

His Excellency highlighted that the Government of Trinidad and Tobago recognises the shortfalls as outlined in Capt. Dr. Williams' research which suggests, "that the growth in youth anti-social behaviour can be correlated with a number of factors which include the breakdown in family support, inadequate teaching techniques at schools, and the lack of opportunities to engage in sports and other recreational activities."

The High Commissioner went on to describe in his address a number key government initiatives such as:

- The Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs embarking on a programme to provide community sporting facilities throughout Trinidad and Tobago,
- The Ministry of Education to establish a National Student 24 Hour Hotline to help stem the element of anti-social behaviour,
- Efforts by the Ministry of the People and Social Development to protect the most vulnerable groups in society, through a series of public lectures to educate the public on Domestic Violence and Child Abuse, aimed at reducing the incidences of domestic violence and child abuse and programmes to help in the curtailment of this behaviour.

As a result, he stated the introduction of a training element to these programmes was "to ensure that these young people improve their life skills which can lead ultimately to an increase in self confidence and healthier lifestyles whilst engaging in these work programmes."

In closing, His Excellency described the work undertaken by Captain Wallace as "a valuable tool that offers valuable insight and additional solutions which will undoubtedly influence the further shaping of policies affecting 'troubled youth' both locally and internationally."

About CVQO

CVQO provides the opportunity for members of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF), Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), Army Cadet Force (ACF) and the Air Training Corps (ATC) to gain internationally recognised vocational qualifications.

CVQO offers all cadets over the age of 16 the opportunity to earn at no cost, one or more vocational qualifications which employers, colleges and universities will acknowledge.

CVQO Ltd is a Company Limited by Guarantee and is a registered charity responsible for organising vocational qualifications for both cadets and their adult instructors throughout the Cadet Forces. We have learners across the UK and overseas.

CVQO is accredited by Edexcel, City & Guilds and the Institute of Leadership and Management (ILM) to deliver various qualifications that have been carefully selected to show employers and educators skills that include leadership, teambuilding, problem-solving, communication, health and physical fitness that young people and adults learn through the Cadet Forces. By offering qualifications designed to develop and improve these important practical skills CVQO aims to provide its members with greater opportunities in both the workplace and in higher education.

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